

## **Montanans Share Ideas and Aspirations for More Tourism Success at Strategic Planning Sessions Across the State**

Over 300 Montanans participated in 23 community input sessions held in 20 communities around the state from October to December 2012. The input sessions along with an on-line survey were the first steps in developing the next [Montana Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan](#).

So what did Montanans have to say about continuing the state's tourism success? Some of the recurring issues discussed at the community sessions and on-line responses included:

- Visitor Information – improved gathering, dissemination and making sure front line staff is knowledgeable and up to date.
- Wayfinding – improved highway signage and use of electronic media.
- Electronic Media – better understanding of how it is used by visitors, how to decide what media to use and what resources are available for technical assistance.
- Seasonality – maintaining current visitor seasons while expanding its length, and building shoulder and winter seasons.
- Improving the curb appeal of communities, businesses and attractions.
- Greater coordination and cooperation among tourism organizations, events and projects.
- Strengthen and encourage more partnership opportunities.
- More useful tourism data for all areas of the state.
- Increased respect and understanding of tourism particularly at the community level.

The statewide strategic plan facilitators – Julie & Jim Cerenzia of Open Window Consulting - continue gathering stakeholder input from Montana tourism and recreation stakeholders. They're doing telephone and in-person interviews. You can contact them at [julie@openwindowconsulting.net](mailto:julie@openwindowconsulting.net) , 406-624-6972, or fill out a survey until Christmas at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MTTourismSurvey>.

Click here to view [Open Window's Project Update Report](#) which summarizes the community input session schedule and attendance along with additional information gathered through the on-line survey process.

You can keep up to date with Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan progress at the project website:

<http://travelmontana.mt.gov/2013StrategicPlan>